

Gentle now,
 doves of the thornberry and
 moringa thicket,
 don't add to my heart-ache
 your sighs.
 Gentle now,
 or your sad cooing
 will reveal the love I hide
 the sorrow I hide away.
 I echo back, in the evening,
 in the morning, echo,
 the longing of a love-sick lover,
 the moaning of the lost.
 In a grove of tamarisks
 spirits wrestled,
 bending the limbs down over
 me,
 passing me away.
 They brought yearning,
 breaking of the heart,
 and other new twists of pain,
 putting me through it.
 Who is there for me in Jám',
 and the Stoning-Place at Miná,
 who for me at Tamarisk Grove,
 or at the way-station of
 Na'mān?
 Hour by hour
 they circle my heart
 in rapture, in love-ache,
 and touch my pillars with a kiss.
 As the best of creation
 circled the Ka'ba,
 which reason with its proofs
 called unworthy,
 And kissed the stones there –
 and he was the Natiq!
 And what is the house of stone
 compared to a man or a
 woman?

تَرْفَقْنَ لَا تُضَعِفْنَ بِالشَّجْوِ أَشْجَانِي

خَفِيَّ صَبَابَاتِي وَمَكْنُونِ أَحْزَانِي

بِحَنَّةٍ مَشْتَاقٍ وَأَنَّةٍ هَيْمَانِ

فَمَالَتْ بِأَفْنَانِ عَلِيٍّ فَأَفْنَانِي

وَمَنْ طَرَفِ الْبَلْوَى إِلَيَّ بِأَفْنَانِ

وَمَنْ لِي بِذَاتِ الْأَثْلِ مَنْ لِي بِنَعْمَانِ

لَوْجَدِ وَتَبْرِيحٍ وَتَلْتَمُّ أَرْكَانِي

يَقُولُ دَلِيلُ الْعَقْلِ فِيهَا بِنُقْصَانِ

وَأَيْنَ مَقَامِ الْبَيْتِ مِنْ قَدْرِ إِنْسَانِ

أَلَا يَا حَمَامَاتِ الْأَرَاكَةِ وَالْبَابِ

تَرْفَقْنَ لَا تُظْهِرْنَ بِالنُّوحِ وَالْبُكَاءِ

أُطَارِحُهَا عِنْدَ الْأَصِيلِ وَبِالضُّحَى

تَنَافَحَتِ الْأَرْوَاحُ فِي غَيْضَةِ الْغَضَا

وَجَاءَتْ مِنْ الشُّوقِ الْمَبْرَحِ وَالْجَوَى

فَمَنْ لِي بِجَمْعِ وَالْمَحْصَبِ مِنْ مَنِيٍّ

تَطُوفُ بِقَلْبِي سَاعَةً بَعْدَ سَاعَةٍ

كَمَا طَافَ خَيْرُ الرُّسُلِ بِالْكَعْبَةِ الَّتِي

وَقَبَّلَ أَحْجَاراً بِهَا، وَهُوَ نَاطِقٌ

*They swore, and how often!
they'd never change – piling up
vows.*

*She who dyes herself red with
henna
is faithless.*

*A white-blazed gazelle
is an amazing sight,
red-dye signalling,
eyelids hinting,*

*Pasture between breastbones
and innards.*

Marvel,

a garden among the flames!

*My heart can take on
any form:*

*a meadow for gazelles,
a cloister for monks,*

*For the idols, sacred ground,
Ka'ba for the circling pilgrim,
the tables of the Torah,
the scrolls of the Qur'án.*

*I profess the religion of love;
wherever its caravan turns along*

the way,

that is the belief,

the faith I keep.

Like Bishr,

Hind and her sister,

love-mad Qays and his lost Láyla,

Máyya and her lover Ghaylán.

فَكَمْ عَهْدَتْ أَنْ لَا تَحُولَ وَأَقْسَمَتْ
وَلَيْسَ لِمَخْضُوبٍ وِفَاءً بِإِيمَانِ

وَمَنْ أَعْجَبِ الْأَشْيَاءِ ظَبْيٌ مُبْرِقٌ
يَشِيرُ بَعْنَابٍ وَيَوْمِي بِأَجْفَانِ

وَمَرَعَاهُ مَا بَيْنَ التَّرَائِبِ وَالْحَشَا
وَيَا عَجَبًا مِنْ رَوْضَةٍ وَسَطَ نِيرَانِ

لَقَدْ صَارَ قَلْبِي قَابِلًا كُلِّ صُورَةٍ
فَمَرَعَى لَغَزْلَانٍ وَدَيْرٍ لِرُهْبَانِ

وَيَبْتَ لِأَوْثَانٍ وَكَعْبَةٍ طَائِفٍ،
وَأَلْوَا حُ تَوْرَاةٍ وَمَصْحَفُ قُرْآنِ

أَدِينُ بِدِينِ الْحَبِّ أَنْتِي تَوَجَّهْتُ
رَكَائِبُهُ فَالْحُبُّ دِينِي وَإِيمَانِي

لَنَا أُسْوَةٌ فِي بَشْرِ هِنْدٍ وَأُخْتِهَا
وَقَيْسٍ وَلَيْلَى ، ثُمَّ مِي وَغَيْلَانَ

Author: Ibn 'Arabi was born in 1165 in Andalusia (today Spain) and died in 1240 in Damascus. From about age 30, he traveled widely throughout the Muslim world of his time. He produced hundreds of works and is best known for his Sufi poetry and philosophy.

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